

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 06752 271532Z

ACTION CU-03

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4203

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FOR CU/ARTS MR. SOLMSEN

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SCUL, IT

SUBJECT: VENICE BIENNALE

1. VENICE BIENNALE HAS FINALLY BEEN ENABLED TO CALL MEETING OF COMMISSIONERS FOR JUNE 3-4. THE BIENNALE HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN A COMPLEX WAR WITH THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT ABOUT FINANCING. IT NOW SEEMS THAT FINANCING WILL BE AVAILABLE, THOUGH NOT AT THE LEVEL THE BIENNALE WOULD PREFER.

2. THE MOST INTERESTING EVENT OF THE LAST FEW MONTHS, AND CAUSE FOR CONSIDERABLE DELAY IN THIS MEETING, WAS THE DRAMATIC RESIGNATION AND RE-APPOINTMENT BY RIPA DI MEANA OVER THE INTERVENTION OF THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR REGARDING THE VENICE BIENNALE THEMATIC PROPOSAL: DISSIDENCE IN EASTERN EUROPE. THIS EVENT HAS ATTRACTED CONSIDERABLE NATIONAL PUBLICITY AND HAS MADE THE SOVIETS LOOK BAD. CORRESPONDINGLY, THE US' ATTITUDE OF PATIENCE WITH REGARD TO THE BIENNALE'S POLITICAL DIMENSION HAS PAID POSITIVE DIVIDENDS, ALL OF WHICH UNDERLINES THE DESIRABILITY OF US PARTICIPATION IN THE NEXT BIENNALE.

3. MEANWHILE, MESSER LETTER TO RIPA INDICATES CONSIDERABLE IMPATIENCE, FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF HIS BEING ABLE TO ORGANIZE A DECENT SHOW IN THE SUMMER OF 1978.

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4. FOR THESE REASONS, WE PLAN A SPECIAL DELEGATION FOR THE MEETING OF JUNE 3-4, WHICH FALLS DURING CAO ABSENCE. WE PROPOSE TO SEND TWO-MAN DELEGATION INCLUDING USIS OFFICIAL AND MILTON GENDEL, ROME CORRESPONDENT FOR ART NEWS. GENDEL WILL UNDERTAKE TO WRITE A REPORT ON ARTISTIC PROPOSALS WHICH CAN BE TRANSMITTED IMMEDIATELY TO MESSER AND TO YOU, PRESUMABLY

BEFORE JUNE 15.

5. REQUEST APPROVAL THIS STRATEGY AND ANY FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS
NEEDED FOR PARTICIPATION IN JUNE 3-4 MEETINGS.GARDNER

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Message Attributes

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